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ABSTRACT

This occasional paper discusses and examines the teaching of history in U.S. schools by noted historians. Byron Hollinshead, vice chair of the National Center for History Education, was moderator for the panel. William H. McNeill, University of Chicago, discussed the problem of pigeonholing or simplifying history into simple equations and how history gives a sense of identity to people. Mary Beth Norton, Cornell University, examined the problem of updating content of history in textbooks used in the classroom. Akira Iriye, Harvard, explained how the study of 20th century U. S. history becomes world history and how the compartmentalization movement is counter to that interrelatedness. Louise Ano Nuevo Kerr, University of Chicago, advocated using history as an active endeavor, not a passive pastime, and how educators must realize that the students' concepts of history are bounded by their own experiences. Tom Dunthorn, social studies specialist for the Florida Department of Education, discussed Florida's work with the social studies framework development and how states must be willing to sustain support for teachers to develop and integrate curricular change. (EH)

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OCCASIONAL PAPER

National Council for History Education, Inc.

promoting history in school and society

Advancing History Education In American Schools

a Symposium at the Library of Congress, March 1-2, 1996

Panel 3

➳ **Moderator: Byron Hollinshead**, *Vice Chair, NCHE; President, National History Day; President, American Historical Publications*

Our panel is an exceptionally distinguished one, and having said that, my introductions will be brief and straightforward. Our first panelist is William McNeill, the Robert A. Millikan Distinguished Professor of History Emeritus at the University of Chicago. He has written a number of books; perhaps the best known is **The Rise of The West: A History of the Human Community**, which won a National Book Award. Professor McNeill was a member of the Bradley Commission on History in Schools, a Founding Trustee of the National Council for History Education, and a Past President of the American Historical Association.

Professor William H. McNeill
(photo by Yusef El-Amin, Library of Congress)

➳ **William H. McNeill**, *Professor of History, University of Chicago, Emeritus*

Before I came I had a set of notes, that I have now scratched, because of reflecting upon what others have said before me on this podium. It seemed to me that two things might be worth putting before you: two obstacles in the way of teaching history well and effectively. The first is that history deals with change in human things, human affairs, and that this tendency runs against the grain of the human mind. Our whole impulse, as children and as adults, is to try to fix the blocs of experience coming upon us into a series of simple compartments, into pigeonholes, so that we'll know how to behave. Such blocs are then frozen by our language, by our simplified terminology. And thence we get this pitiful effort that Carol Gluck referred to (yesterday), to take very complicated things like the history of the Second World War, and reduce it to a nice little capsule that we can stick in and say, "We did this. That happened." This is a reassuring story about how human beings have indeed managed the world. But until you get to about 30 years of age, you do not really intuitively believe that things do change. I can still remember when I got to be about 30, looked at a class of students, and suddenly realized that as a professional historian I ought to have known

that things change. It suddenly dawned on me that those students in front of me, college students, didn't know what the Depression was. I had grown up in the Depression—that was reality, that was the world—and all at once I realized: *Even I was never going to be there again. The 1930s are gone, and they don't share it. How can I talk to them, how reach across such a generational gap?*

That's what a teacher of history is trying to do to people who aren't yet 30 years of age. It means running against the grain of the human mind. It's an almost impossible task, to make really believable the thought that things once were very different, that they changed gradually, and that there isn't that black-white, good-bad, yes-no, nor the equivalent of a computer's on-off. It's a gradual, grey, everything-is-complicated, the world's always changing. It's the most difficult comprehension to make it really believable. And that's what we're trying to do. The younger they are, the more difficult it is. It really is, so in a sense, you have to wait 'til they are 30, before the teaching and study of history can be internalized in a spontaneous way. We are really running against the grain of the human mind. I think we ought to know that, and understand it, and have it with us all the time. It doesn't mean we shouldn't try. We put the words before them, and maybe when they do get to be 30 they'll suddenly believe it, but it'll take awhile.

The other point I want to make is this: history tells us who we are, in the sense of what groups we belong to. History deals with public associations of human beings, and every one of us belongs to many different groups, and sometimes the groups are rivals with one another, each with its own history. So the question is, whose history? Which group's histories get into school, and which do not belong in school? Usually personal and family history, together with local history is pretty much scanted. Religion is tip-toed around because of the division of church and state, with the result that public schools generally push religion to one side. Instead it is the nation, front and center. This was the great 19th century answer to what group matters most: it's the nation that matters, and the creation of national histories, and the fascination with them and the emphasis upon them is still with us, of course. That is, in fact, how history got into the classroom. It wasn't a subject in older times: language, the three R's, the seven liberal arts; there was no history. History got into the classroom to make nations out of peasants, out of localities, out of the human raw material that existed, in the countries of Europe and in the not so very United States as well.

> *I'm not sure that I can convince anyone that the advances of human power over nature and over one another is, and ought to be, an organizing theme for human history. Yet it was an enormous adventure...*
>
> *—William H. McNeill*

But in the 20th century, we have come to admit and recognize that a nation has many parts, and the effort of 20th century historians is to put those parts into national history and into transnational history, insofar as it is taught at all. And so you get labor history, women's history, black history, ethnic histories, and many other such types of history. And how are they all going to be put together, and then reconciled, the one and the many, *e pluribus unum?* Is there a common history that comprehends the whole, a national commonality, with many parts, together with a global commonality, with many parts, for world history? I firmly believe that there is; I think there are experiences and encounters that run across all the sub-groups within the nation and in the world. Such things for the U. S. are the rise of cities and industrialization, impacting upon all the different segments of the society. And, more recently perhaps, the new information processing, the information net, which is going to transform so-

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ciety in an unimaginable fashion. So maybe you can look at the separate parts, and also see how they operate in response to common encounters. And in the world, yes, the same sort of thing, the successive forms of human society, and the experience, from the hunters and gatherers to neolithic, the early urban societies, and then, I think, a series of horizons of new encounters and new institutional creativity as well.

When I finished writing **The Rise of the West**, I found, to my surprise—and it was a surprise—that as I looked back at what I'd been talking about, I decided what I had written about was a history of the advance of human power over nature and over one another. If you look at the last pages you will find that I say that. Power is not a very fashionable word in our society. We're very aware of the abuses of power, and those who suffer *from* power, those who are subjected to it. I'm not sure that I can convince anyone that the advances of human power over nature and over one another is, and ought to be, an organizing theme for human history. Yet it was an enormous adventure, widening the niche that human beings occupy in the ecosystem. That's the kind of history I wrote. The institutional inventions, such things as the higher religions, that can be transported anywhere in the world today, belong in that story. In fact I had a lot to say about religion in **The Rise of the West**.

So I think there are themes that run through the whole of human history, as well as the centuries of American national history, and what we need to do is try to agree upon some of them, and seek earnestly to remember the many within the one—the pluralities, conflicts, the divergence of interests, all responding to common encounters. Then we would have a coherent history. It's easy to say; it's very hard to do. But I think the guidelines I helped to shape (speaker holds up **Building a History Curriculum**, the report of the Bradley Commission on History in Schools) do it. I think both of the principal commissions that have tried to outline an appropriate curriculum made a pretty good stab at it. The national standards are not nearly as bad as they have been accused of being, and in particular they did quite well with world history, in my not so humble opinion, even if I *am* a biased witness.

➳**Byron Hollinshead:** Mary Beth Norton, our next speaker, is Professor of History at Cornell University. She is the author of **Liberty's Daughters: The Revolutionary Experience of American Women, 1750-1800**. She is the General Editor of the AHA **Guide to Historical Literature** and a Founding Member of NCHE and a Trustee since 1990. Professor Norton served on the NCHE Focus Group on the U. S. history standards, and is currently serving on the NCHE curriculum guidelines Advisory Council.

➳**Mary Beth Norton**, *Department of History, Cornell University*

I've been spending the last few months working on updating my textbook (**A People and A Nation**, published by Houghton Mifflin Company), which is used in high school AP classes and honors classes as well as college freshmen courses. So I thought that here I would focus on the problem of updating the content of history in the classroom, with particular reference to my own fields of early American women's history and colonial history in general. The kind of history I teach today is very different from the kind of history I studied in school, and looking around the room at the ages of people here, it's also very different from the kind of history you studied! In fact, I'm fond of telling my students that most of the courses I teach at Cornell are courses that did not even *exist* when I was a student. They are courses that not only didn't I take—I couldn't have taken them. As a result, it can be a daunting task for anyone who was educated as all of us were, to think about beginning to change the content of the courses we teach. Still, I think we can reap great rewards in student interest as we challenge their ahistorical assumptions, by tackling two separate tasks. One is historicizing subjects that students don't think of as having a history. The second is mak-

ing them see that they are distorting the past by viewing, through present-day lenses, subjects that they do recognize as having a history, and not recognizing that the way they look at those topics needs to be changed. This approach goes far beyond the old cry of the 1960s for "relevant history," because what it does is to use things that students are familiar with today to point up change over time. Once they recognize those changes, they can apply their insights to other historical questions.

I want to offer a couple of examples based on my own teaching experience, which is admittedly in college. Still, I think the same approaches can be applied at other levels also. My aim is to illustrate the two points I just mentioned: historicizing subjects that students don't think of as having a history, and making students understand that they are distorting the past by looking at the past through assumptions they make about the present. Excellent examples of the first, that is, historicizing topics that students think of as timeless, can come from examinations of what Alfred Crosby has called the Columbian Exchange and its consequences. That is, the exchange of plants, animals, and diseases among Europe, Asia, and the Americas as a result of the Columbus voyages. It seems to me that material of this sort can be adapted to any grade level by employing different topics and layers of sophistication. In particular, I am always fascinated by the reaction, when it suddenly hits my college students, that the familiar image they have from TV westerns of Plains Indians riding around on horses couldn't have happened until the Spanish arrived, because there *were* no horses until the Spanish arrived. Even elementary students could grasp the idea that horses arrived at a particular point in time with the Spanish, and that Plains Indians lived very different lives before Spaniards arrived on the American continents.

Likewise, this last fall in my course on 17th century American history, I had a student from the Agriculture College at Cornell who was thrilled to discover that livestock had a history. He was interested in reading in William Cronon's **Changes in the Land** about the impact of pigs and cows on the New England landscape. In fact, whenever certain issues came up in class, he could immediately clarify just what it was about pigs and cows that had this impact. It was great fun to have this "Ag" student in the class. Such discussions would work well in rural areas, where many students would be intimately familiar with pigs and cows. The ubiquity of corn (which originated in the Americas) around the world can also be used to stimulate thought. There's a wonderful image of an 18th century African village surrounded by cornfields. Just think of what could be done with that image in a classroom, talking about: what are these people growing, and where did it come from? For older students, such as the ones in my classroom, the history of disease, and in particular, the history of smallpox can serve a similar purpose. It is stunning when they realize how crucial the history of disease and its transmission is to the way in which the North American continent developed. So all of these topics can help to historicize subjects that students don't understand have histories.

> *I think we can reap great rewards in student interest as we challenge their ahistorical assumptions, by tackling two separate tasks. One is historicizing subjects that students don't think of as having a history. The second is making them see that they are distorting the past by viewing, through present-day lenses, subjects that they do recognize as having a history...*
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> *—Mary Beth Norton*

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Now on the other issue, the correcting of distortions. In my teaching, I find it very interesting that students will occasionally reject what I have to say because it is so opposed to the assumptions they make about life today. I always look for those moments in my classes, because it tells me something crucial. Students always try to figure you out, and they want to give you what you want. When you tell them something, and they absolutely reject what you're saying, you're touching something important, because usually they'll just nod their heads and write it down. I wanted to share with you a story about a lecture I gave in my women's history course some years ago. I was talking about the fact that in Indian captivities, European women were far less likely to want to return to American colonial society than European men were. I thought I had built up to this climax rather well. I talked about women's position in Indian societies, and how much better off, in some senses, women were in Indian societies. I had discussed at length the subordination of women in English society. Consequently, I thought this was a logical conclusion, and that when I got to this stage in the lecture everyone would nod their heads and write it down: *yes, it is in fact true that maybe a European woman would make a rational choice to stay in an Indian society, rather than coming back to colonial American society.* Instead, the students literally *erupted*. I'd never had anything like this happen before in class. I had students jumping out of their seats, saying "That can't be true." I was surprised and taken aback by their response. (I now anticipate this reaction when I talk about the subject.) It was fortunately at the end of the class period, and at the next class I decided I couldn't let it go by, so I started off by saying, "I want to talk about what happened at the end of the last class. Why did you all reject what I said? I can give you the citations from the scholarly literature that tallies up what the captives did, and many women didn't come back, when offered the chance." There was silence—dead silence—in the room, and finally a young woman in the back of the room held up her hand, tentatively, and she said, "We were being ethnocentric." And I said, "You got it." Then we had a wonderful discussion about their ethnocentric assumptions that had not, in fact, been challenged at all by the scholarly material I had discussed earlier in the lecture.

I try to work with these sorts of things in my classes. Another topic I've discovered that works well is talking about the history of courtship. I don't know if you are familiar with a book by Beth Bailey, **From Front Porch to Back Seat**. Students learn from it that there have been changing conventions of courtship and dating in 20th century America. It blows my freshmen and sophomore students' minds to discover that in the 1920s a young woman was regarded as immoral if she danced more than once with the same man at a dance, and that, in fact, women were expected to date many men simultaneously. It is a lot of fun to use this information in class. The two techniques I've discussed here both lead students to historicize the past in a way they haven't done previously, and that gives us a way to reach students that we would otherwise not have. I think I'll end there.

➳ **Byron Hollinshead:** I can't resist one comment on this: yesterday (in our Symposium sessions), repeatedly one of the things that kept coming up was *story, story, story*. History is story. As Mary Beth was talking about the inclination of women to stay with Indian tribes, it occurred to me that if students had read John Demos' story of a single woman who decided to stay with an Indian tribe [**The Unredeemed Captive**], then it might have been more plausible.

Our next speaker is Akira Iriye, who is Professor of History at Harvard University. He is the author of 12 books, 7 in English and 5 in Japanese. Professor Iriye is Past President of the American Historical Association, and a Past President of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations.

Akira Iriye, *Department of History, Harvard University*

Thank-you very much. So much has already been said about the need for studying history and especially studying historical concepts, that I don't really think I've got much to contribute that's really new. But I thought I should say just a little bit about the interconnectedness between national history and world history. It was my privilege to serve on the national standards committee at UCLA for a number of years, and I share Bill McNeill's perspective on it. I think it was a very honest attempt at trying to figure out American history and world history in such a way that this material could be taught at different levels. But one question that did arise to me was interconnectedness, that is, we tended to compartmentalize. On one side there were people who did American history, "Americanists." On the other side were people who did world history. Whatever justification there may be for this, in terms of the courses you have to teach (if you have to teach American history or if you have to teach world history), the distinctions would seem to be meaningless when you get to the contemporary world, that is, the 20th century.

> *...they had all come to the decision—20 out of 20—that the United States was justified [in dropping the bomb].*
>
> *Well, you may or may not agree with it, I may or may not agree with it myself, but they had done their homework, they had come to their own conclusions, and that's what I think history is all about.*
>
> *—Akira Iriye*

People ask me what kind of history I do, and I usually say "I do 20th century history." I don't say I do American history, or Japanese history, or European history; I say I do 20th century history. It seems to me that when you get to the 20th century, to study American history really means to study world history, and vice versa. One problem that the standards may have had, particularly in world history, dealing with the 20th century part of it (and I share some of that concern), is because of its compartmentalization. Everything about U. S. history got into the U. S. part of the standards, and therefore you study world history minus U. S. history in the 20th century, but that's really quite meaningless. In the same way, to study American history without studying something about world history would be meaningless, too. American history and the voices of the world have become so intermeshed with each other over the decades, to such an extent that in some areas it is really quite indistinguishable: information technology, Americanization of world food and eating habits, culture and fashions, or the impact of foreign affairs upon American life. All of these would seem to make it more meaningful, I think, to study the contemporary world, the subject of 20th century history, as a monolithic thing rather than dividing it into compartmentalized segments.

Probably, if I may be permitted to become somewhat personal on this, I became aware of the interconnectedness between national history and international history when, in 1945, I was in fifth grade in Japan. When the war came to an end, national history ceased to exist; in other words, up to a point from grade one on, we had been fed all of this wartime propaganda, which we believed to be the truth. But it was national history, and we had not been taught anything else about history, a very chauvinistic kind of exercise. And during the occupation, the occupation headquarters told the teachers to just destroy all the history and geography textbooks that had presented chauvinistic and nation-centered views of the world, as seen from Japan's perspective. All of that was going to be

changed, and there was going to be no teaching of national history under the occupation. MacArthur told us there should not be taught any kind of nation-centered history or nation-centered geography, which was a tremendous discovery for us: that there was something out there that had nothing to do with Japan, that a history of the world had been in existence quite apart from Japan, and that Japan was not the center of the world. All of that, for a ten-year-old, was just an invigorating experience; it just was a wonderful sensation for us.

At the same time, I think it dawned upon us, too, that now another kind of orthodoxy was being substituted for the previous kind. That is, we had been taught what the Japanese emperor wanted us to know about Japanese history, which was about the history of the emperors. That was all going to be destroyed. And there was going to be taught another kind of history, which was what MacArthur wanted us to know about world history. I had more fun with it, because it was much more interesting than the Emperors' history. But, nevertheless, he tried to force a certain version of history, and I think what I sensed to be historical inquiry, at least for me personally, starts from this realization. I felt that rather than simply remembering, or learning what the higher authorities of the state, or the government, or whoever had the power, wanted us to learn, it should be possible for individuals, however small, however young, to develop their own ways of understanding the past, becoming literate about the past. In doing that, of course, it is helpful to be always aware of this international perspective, extra-national perspective.

Last year, I was attending a meeting like this in Japan, meeting with high school and middle school social studies teachers, history teachers. One teacher made the comment that, in his classroom the students had discussed the atomic bomb question. And they had been presented with all kinds of available data, from the American side and the Japanese side. They were to read the materials, just as the national standards said that students in this country should, going into this question, and make up their own minds as to the justice or justification of the atomic bombing mission. To the teacher's surprise—and dismay, probably—20 out of the 20 students said that the United States was justified in dropping the bomb. And the teacher at this meeting asked me, "What shall I do about it?" So I said, "That's wonderful. It's a really wonderful thing that they had read the documents; honestly struggled through the implications of all this, and independent of each other, not under some peer pressure or teacher's pressure or anything like that, that they had all come to the decision—20 out of 20—that the United States was justified."

Well, you may or may not agree with it, I may or may not agree with it myself, but they had done their homework, they had come to their own conclusions, and that's what I think history is all about. You present the students with data, evidence of different kinds, and then the teacher's job is to guide them, or help them make up their minds. That is freedom, free inquiry, and I do think that it is the essence of historical teaching, so that you can open up the past and give it an interpretation, as honestly as you can, on the basis of available documentation. The study of history, in this sense, is an ultimate guarantor of freedom. Thank-you very much.

➳ **Byron Hollinshead:** Louise Año Nuevo Kerr is Associate Professor of History and former Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She was a presidentially-appointed member of the National Council of the National Endowment for the Humanities. She is a former Vice President and member of the Board of the Chicago Metro History Fair.

➳ **Louise Año Nuevo Kerr**, *Department of History, University of Chicago*

I come before you, an academic from a university, nevertheless representing a "public" history point of view. My goal is to have us think about history as a public venue. Whether we

teach in a high school or college classroom, we really have responsibilities out there, a public charge and also a public opportunity. I wanted to make two related points. Professor McNeill's remarks, in a way, gave me a small springboard for the first point. He talked about how he had looked out at his classroom and thought that until the age of thirty students may not be capable of learning history because they had not experienced it. For that same reason I make the plea that all of us think of teaching the history survey, in my case the U. S. History survey , as an opportunity to ameliorate this disability. The survey gives us an annual or semi-annual reminder of why we teach history and why it is important. We all teach at different levels but I know that this fall when I look out at the freshmen in the survey I will be looking at students born in 1978 or 1979. The question will be not "Do they remember the Great Depression?" or "Where were they when Kennedy was shot?" These students will not remember President Reagan. I need to be reminded every year that more of history is brand new to students. The survey gives us an opportunity to share this "pristine" information.

Secondly, I'd like to talk about some examples of using history as an active endeavor, not just a passive pastime for us or for the students. The first example is a course on community history I taught at Colorado College in Colorado Springs. The College divides its year into nine blocks during each of which students take only one course for a month. I was asked to teach the students, in one month, the history of Colorado Springs, a community I had never even visited before. This was the only course they took during that month. I quickly located primary documents and archives in the College and city libraries and mapped out the course which was one of *the* most exciting classes I have ever taught. I have tried to replicate that experience in more typical classrooms. The exercise required that these sophomore and junior students master the secondary materials, encounter original documents and conduct and transcribe one carefully selected oral interview (a total of twenty-four interviews were conducted) within that month.

This was a "team" project. Historians usually work in isolation. We toil alone, revelling in the musty smell of old libraries and archives. When they leave the university, however, students go out into the world to work, most often in groups. My thought was that this assignment could teach and give experience in how to achieve results together. The problem was to find a way to complete the task without the students feeling they might be judged unfairly because some "slacker" would not get the job done. Collectively they devised a strategy that gave each student a specific challenge and job. They were dependent on each other to complete the individual tasks and to finish the larger project successfully. Each was to write a chapter on a particular subject. Together they produced what amounted to a book covering various aspects of the history of Colorado Springs. They were very pleased to learn later that their work became valuable to an economic development effort based on the community's history taking place at the time.

The next project is one I am working on now with the Chicago Historical Society. The museum is developing neighborhood history exhibits, one of which is on Pilsen, a Chicago Mexican neighborhood. The CHS is engaging adults as well as students in the collection of documents that will be the basis for the history being gathered and interpreted. The process of developing the exhibit is tying the community's history to larger themes which reflect the relationship of the neighborhood not just to state and national events but to international movements as well. Patterns of migration, settlement, industrialization, urbanization, and the rusting and rejuvenation of the nation's midsection come into play as the neighborhood searches for its past and interprets its own history.

A final example of public history is the Metro History Fair in Chicago. Some of you may know of this program which has been mostly at the senior high school level but has now been taken into the junior high schools. Teachers are given extensive training to help their students do local and family histories using primary documents. Through these activities it is hoped that these apprentice historians will choose to take more

courses in the history curriculum and further develop their knowledge, skills, and historical imagination.

All of these examples are meant to help us think of ways to urge students to receive history as active and useful as well as inherently interesting. The survey provides the historical foundation they can build upon. The public history exercises help them to extract meaning from the history of the familiar. When asked to participate Chicagoans would say, "What's in it for me?" I would suggest that what's in history for me, or for them, or for anyone, is to be actively engaged; to be able to have knowledge they can understand and that is exciting. The message from Chicago is that history is constantly being revitalized. It is an engaging endeavor that is satisfying as well as interesting. Our task is to find ways to convey that message.

> *...this fall when I look out at the freshmen in the survey I will be looking at students born in 1978 or 1979. The question will be not "Do they remember the Great Depression?" or "Where were they when Kennedy was shot?" These students will not remember President Reagan.*
>
> *—Louise Año Nuevo Kerr*

Byron Hollinshead: Tom Dunthorn, our next speaker, is the State Social Studies Specialist for the Florida Department of Education, where he's been responsible for developing one of the country's most exciting and interesting history-centered curricula. Mr. Dunthorn is a Past President of the National Council of State Social Studies Specialists.

Tom Dunthorn, *State Social Studies Specialist, Florida Dept. of Education*

Thank-you and good morning. I got here very early this morning; I am one of those persons who is never late and always early. I got here very early—I call it a sense of duty. Others who work with me inform me that they have more descriptive terms for that, but it was a fortunate encounter because I met some other people who were just like me. We were talking; it was about this conference, and how exciting this has been for us. As I came upstairs I talked to several other people. I don't think, however, that I really made the connection until I was walking up the stairs to the dais. What has been really exciting about all of this has been the opportunity to have a lot of conversations. We have seven or eight minutes of people speaking; we have opportunities then to sit down and talk about it, and as we go back to our classrooms, maybe we should remember that students get excited, just as we do, about opportunities to explore and express thoughts and ideas. So I want to thank the National Council for History Education for helping us have this opportunity for exchange. It really has been exciting.

As I was thinking about what I was going to say here, and the suggestion that I talk about what our experience has been in Florida, I went back and looked at **Building a History Curriculum.** I looked at the report of the Florida Commission on Social Studies Education. I thought about the unique experience that I had working with primary, intermediate, middle and high school teachers, and working with some people from the university. Actually it sounds like a lot but there were only about 20 of us. We had the opportunity to sit down and, over three years, to talk about what we were doing in our schools, what we were doing in our classrooms,

what was there that was good, what was there that was really exciting. I wish I could spend hours talking to you about our vision for what social studies education is; we don't have that kind of time. But one of the very first things was (and I'm not sure that we've discussed it here enough at this point): what is it that we want our students to look like at the end of 13 years of public schooling? What do we want them to look like at the end of either a community college experience or a university experience? That's something that we really need to do. That vision of where we want to go is so important. As professional educators in Florida, we struggled with that for several months before we ever got down to the task of writing a curriculum. We kept coming back to that. So I think it is something that we perhaps need to do here a little bit more than we have.

One of the things that we did as we went about our business of talking about social studies education was to look in real classrooms. There were things there that gave us quite a bit of concern; there were those things that excited us. We found that there was less excitement among students where teachers were the font of all knowledge, and where there was just that one-way conversation, that students were not allowed, perhaps, to give their opinions or explore ideas. They were to parrot information back. Contrast that with the excitement where students had the opportunity to talk as we are doing, constructing new knowledge, taking information from other people and other sources, and making new sense of what they are doing and what they are about. I have worked, as probably many of you have, in writing public school textbooks for publishing companies. For two of the major publishing companies' social studies K-7 materials, I had the opportunity to write test questions (the test booklet that comes along with the text). For the first series that I worked on, I did exactly as they wanted; there wasn't a question asked that the answer was not found somewhere in each chapter. The second time I sat down to work on a new series, I said, "Let's try it this way. Let's ask some questions where students actually think, rather than copy information out of a book." Well, we went around and around, and it was not something that they wanted. They said, "we're sorry, that's not the way we want to go." Well, the money was darned good, so...but it was the last time I worked for them—it was the last time they *asked* me. The point is, these texts offered no new avenues for exploration, for constructing new ideas.

We found excitement in classrooms where there were multiple resources. We found difficulties and boredom where there was only one textbook. Florida's scope and sequence encourages the use of multiple resources. In fact, we are not even sure we want students to have a textbook anymore, because it becomes *the* only source, and it oftentimes becomes the curriculum. There is nothing wrong with a textbook in a classroom, and in fact, it's not that we don't recommend the use of textbooks. What we do recommend is that they have class sets of several *different* textbooks. And that is something that is hard for teachers to accept, those teachers who rely on one text as their sole resource. I am probably going to take just the opposite side to that: I shamelessly market those things that I find exciting, and Joy Hakim's **History of US** books—we use them in fourth and fifth grades—are really exciting, and students love them. But let's use literature, art, and music to enrich the study of history—to help students explore their understanding of history.

We found classrooms where students sat at desks and never had an opportunity to talk to each other, to be very distressing. We found, where cooperative learning was taking place, excitement among students. It's very frustrating, being from a small town in Florida. We have three TV stations there, and one of them doesn't even have evening news (they run Rush Limbaugh at the six o'clock news hour), but there's one station that I watch regularly. Every time they have a segment on education, they run the same news clip. It's a social studies classroom because you see maps on the wall. What are the kids doing in that clip? Every time we see it, and we must see it once every six weeks, they are sitting at their desks, they have their books open, and you know they are answering questions at the end of the chapter. Obviously, there is no engagement, no challenge.

Student thinking is devalued; we found students who never have the opportunity to express themselves. You can walk in and see it: the teacher asks a question, and unless they are sure of the answer, students are never going to raise their hands. You know there is never going to be any exploration, any questions. We find those classrooms exciting where you explore knowledge, and it's distressing where there is only one fixed body of knowledge. We found schools exciting where academics was central to schooling, where it was powerful in schooling. It was distressing in those schools where we found instrumentalism prevailing, where it was a lot of add-ons from well-meaning people, or bus schedules, or what have you—it was very frustrating.

If we do not prepare teachers, if we do not provide sustained support for those teachers that are in our schools—that is, not a two-week summer institute, but sustained education throughout the year for teachers—then more time is not necessarily going to mean more meaningful instruction or deeper understandings.

—Tom Dunthorn

We found that there was a redundancy in the way history courses had been sequenced, with every teacher beginning at the beginning and trying to get to the end. Elementary teachers never got past the Civil War; eighth-grade teachers began all over again and rarely got past the first World War; high school teachers taught a decade a day at the end of the year. We found that state history was taught at fourth grade and had nothing to do with what was taught in fifth grade. We actually are suggesting that we begin historical study in second grade, where students explore their community history, and begin to take responsibility for the place in which they live. Third grade is a thematic look at the world. We started originally talking about more of a classical approach to world history, but the third grade teachers were saying, "You want me to teach the Renaissance to my third graders," and we said, "No, that wasn't the idea." So we've taken more of a thematic approach to it now, exploring communication, time, agriculture, art, architecture, laws and government, travel, trade and exploration. We teach fourth and fifth graders an integrated, literature-based U. S. history and Florida history. In middle school, as we know it, the students do not have social studies class every day. The math teacher says, "I have to have these students every day or they're going to fail," though even when they're there, sometimes they're not. We looked at a geographic model that students could move in and out of very easily. For high school we're recommending and implementing a three-year history sequence in grades nine, ten, and eleven. There's still not enough time in any of those years to really teach meaningfully if we try to teach it all. We've got to post-hole, we've got to allow students greater opportunities to explore the many different ideas that are there.

With every new model of what we do in our schools, and with all the conversations that we've had here, there are probably just a couple of really critical points with which I'd like to conclude. If we do not prepare teachers, if we do not provide sustained support for those teachers that are in our schools—that is, not a two-week summer institute, but sustained education throughout the year for teachers—then more time is not necessarily going to mean more meaningful instruction or deeper understandings. If we offer more courses (and I was on a committee yesterday discussing this), if we mandate four years or five years or six years, if

we don't provide that sustained support for teachers, then we're still not going to have meaningful instruction or deeper understanding. We talk a lot about block scheduling and greater time. I was at a meeting like this, only I was doing all the talking. The group was made up of teachers, and as soon as I mentioned block scheduling, teachers' arms went up, and I thought, *I'm on shaky ground here.* To make a point, at the end a teacher walked up and said, "Block scheduling doesn't work," and I asked "Why?" He said, "Well, the first hour I lecture. The second hour, the kids answer questions at the end of the chapter, and they are bored."

Thanks so much, all of you.